

# TERMON

Preached before the

# KING

AT

WHITE-HALL,

ON

Sunday, January 18th. 1684.

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WILLIAM CAVE, D.D. Canon of Windsor  
and Chaplain to His Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary.

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Printed by His Majesties Special Command.

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LONDON,

Printed for Richard Crisp, at the Bell and  
the Swan's Head, in Fleet-street.

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## Psalm IV. VII.

*Thou hast put gladness in my Heart,  
more than in the time, that their  
Corn, and their Wine increased.*

Joy and Pleasure are things so truly desirable by all Mankind, so agreeable to the frame, and first inclinations of humane nature, that Religion usually suffers from nothing more in the minds of Men, than in being thought to be an enemy to them. They look upon it as a dry and sower task, a piece of sullen and cloystered Devotion, that dooms Men to a black melancholy temper, and condemns them to nothing but fasting and mourning,

ing, to sadness and solitude: As if a Man could no sooner engage in a strict virtuous course, but he must presently renounce his appetites, and divest himself of all the ease and comfort of his Life. Such are the ordinary apprehensions, which Men of loose and prejudic'd Minds have of Religion: Than which nothing can be more absurd and false, and more directly opposite to its Nature and Tendency, which is to ennable the Minds of Men, to advance our present interest, and to instate us in perfect peace, both with God and our own Consciences.

It were no hard matter to shew, that things rightly considered, Religion is no Enemy to external pleasure, it ties us up from nothing, but what our own Reason and Interest should restrain.

restrain us from, to wit, what is either unmanly, or pernicious, unbecoming the Dignity of our Natures, and destructive both of our present Welfare, and our future Happiness. In all harmless and innocent satisfactions, that neither intrench upon the Honour of God, nor the Rights of others, nor our own peace and quiet, we have leave to pick and choose, to crop what delights we please; and what wise and reasonable Man can desire more? Besides, by obliging us to use lawful things according to the measures of Temperance and Sobriety, it gives the truest gust and relish to them.

But my busines at present lies with pleasures of another sort, such as are Divine and Spiritual; and seated in the noblest part of Man, and which are

are as much beyond all sensual delights, as the Soul is of a finer make and constitution than the Body; and these the Royal Psalmist here tells us, he valued infinitely above all advantages upon Earth, *I bon bant put gladness in my Heart, more than in the time, (though a time of greatest festivity and rejoicing,) the time that their Corn and their Wine encreased.*

See Isa. ix.  
iii.  
Jer. xlvi.iii.  
xxxiii.

In prosecution of which words, I shall briefly enquire into three things.

1. The nature of this inward joy and pleasure. 2. What influence Religion has upon the Joy and Pleasure of a Man's mind. 3. I shall consider the excellency of the pleasures of Religion, above all the Delights and Pleasures of this World.

We

We shall begin with the Nature of this inward Joy and Pleasure, by which I do not mean, a natural gaiety and cheerfulness of Humour, or a few light and transient fits of Mirth, nor yet any strong and confident presumptions of God's Love and Favour, or any rapturous transports, and sensible ravishments of Joy, which however in extraordinary cases, they may be granted to some, are yet very often in those that pretend most to them, little else, but the quick and vigorous motions of the Animal Spirits, impregnated by the force and power of a warm active fancy. That which I here intend, is a solid and rational satisfaction of mind, in the goodness and soundness of a Man's estate towards God, and flows usually from these two things.

I.

1. From

1. From a sincere and regular discharge of our duty, which brings its own comfort and tranquility along with it : The Harmony of our Souls depends upon an even and orderly course of Piety, every violation of our obedience makes a breach upon our peace, and sets us back in the favour of Heaven. All pleasure is founded in an agreeableness between the Faculty and the Object : Now there is an essential and eternal congruity between a reasonable Soul and moral goodness ; which the more it is cherished, the nearer we return to our Natural and Original State. All actions of Nature are very pleasant and delightful, and certainly we never act more agreeably to the right frame and constitution of our Souls, than when we pursue the designs of Virtue

tue and Religion, when we are careful to Love, Worship, Honour, and Obey our Maker ; to keep our Faculties in due Order and Decorum , to be just, kind, helpful, and beneficial to Men : Hence springs that contentment and satisfaction, that is lodged in the minds of good Men, it being as possible for the Sun-beams to be without Light and Heat, as Virtue without an inward complacency and delight.

2. This pleasure lies in a cheerful reflexion upon a Man's innocence, and the integrity of his actions, when a Man dares look back upon what he has done, and knows that he has the testimony and approbation of Heaven on his side, bearing witness to the vote and suffrage of his own conscience. And indeed what can possibly

B admi-

administer greater security and satisfaction to a good Man, than the assurance that he has sincerely done his duty, and that he is accepted with God. *If our heart condemns us not,* says the Apostle, that is, either of Hypocrisy or neglect, *then have we confidence towards God.* Upon such a review, a calmness and Joy over-spreads the mind, and a Man is refreshed with the remembrance of his past Life. Which made the wiser Heathens say, that Virtue was a reward to its self, and that a good Man always carries a Heaven in his own Bosome: *Nulla re tam letari soleo,* (says Cicero) *quam officiorum meorum conscientia;* I am refreshed and pleased with nothing more, than the Conscience of having done my duty; or it might have been rendred in those words

words of St. Paul, *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the World.* And this will be farther evident, if we consider,

## II.

What influence Religion has upon the Joy and Pleasure of a Man's mind, which will clearly appear from these following instances.

1. Religion restores a Man to the grace and favour of God, and assures him that his Sins are pardoned, and his peace made with Heaven, that there is a league of friendship between God and him, that his transgressions are done away, and that God will remember his Sins no more. Than which, what stronger Spring of Joy and comfort can there be to a

Man's mind. If the respects and kindness of a great Man, be so highly valuable, and the smiles of a Prince so refreshing, that as *Solomon* speaks, *In the light of the King's Countenance there is Life, and his favour is as the Cloud of the latter Rain.* What pleasure must it be for a Man to think, that he has the friendship and favour of the great King and Governor of the World, *In whose favour is Life, yea, whose loving kindness is better than Life it self.* So long as God is an Enemy, all within us must needs be either full of fears, or in a state of War: For Conscience having relation to God, as its immediate Lord and Superior, cannot be kind and friendly to those that are **Traitors to Heaven.**

Prov. 16.15  
Psalm 30.  
5. 63.3.

The

The wise Creator of all things, has so framed and contrived our Natures, that either joy or torment shall be our portion according as the cause goes within our own Breasts. By Sin we displease the most delicate sense of our minds, and by offering violence to the Laws of our duty, we presently fall out of our own favour, as well as God's; and are thereby exposed to the sharp lashes of an injured Conscience. Guilt is naturally troublesome and uneasy, it frets and gauls the mind, and fills the Soul with jealous and dreadful thoughts of God, which in despite of all the Arts and Shifts, that Men can use, will still pursue and haunt them, and prey upon them by invisible fears. When we have done all that we can to deceive our selves, we cannot al-

ter\*

ter the nature of things, Vice will be Vice, and Guilt will be apt to disturb and awaken Conscience, and bad Men will be afraid to die; and their Souls will tremble at the apprehensions of a day of doom. *Epicurus* thought, he had sufficiently secured the enjoyment of his pleasures, and fortified himself against the assaults of inquietudes and fears, when he had discharged the Justice and Providence of God, and had done what was possible, to banish the force of Religion, and the belief of a future state out of the minds of Men.

But let us see how he himself succeeded in this affair. *The Philosopher in Tully*, gives us this account of him; \* I never saw any one, says he,

*who was more afraid of those very things, which he himself affirmed were*

\* *Nec quenquam vidi, qui magis ea que timenda esse negaret, timeret, mortem dico & Deos.*  
Cotta ap. Cic.  
de Nat. Deor.  
Lib. I.

not

not to be feared, to wit, Death, and the vengeance of the Gods. And another of their Writers tells us of him, that when Cited to appear before his Judges, he came with the most dejected look, and confuted his fine Notions of mirth and pleasure, by his own sad melancholy Countenance. Nothing can lay a firm Foundation of true ease and quiet to our minds, but the satisfaction, that God is our Friend, and that all stands clear between him and us; and nothing can entitle us to that, but a solid Piety, an unfeigned Repentance for what is past, and a sincere Reformation for the future course and practice of our Life.

2. A course of Virtue and Religion subdues theordinate appetites and vicious inclinations, which are the

suſtaiνor θεον  
επινεος, η  
το θεον  
διδασκαλη  
ρεια διδασκαλη  
Homer. declam.  
in Epicur. ap.  
Phot. Cod. 243.  
p. 1084.

the great Fountains of inquietude and trouble. Look upon a Man, that has broken loose from the restraints of Sobriety and Vertue, and abandoned himself to a Life of Debauchery and Sensuality, and you will find his Soul like a Forest of wild Beasts, over-run with mutiny and disorder; his desires are infinite, his passions furious and ungovernable, his inclinations different, apt to lye crost to, and to fall foul upon one another.

*Isai. 51.20.* *The wicked, says the Prophet, are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.* In vain is it to expect calmness and serenity, where the Waves are continually tossed with violent Storms; and as vain to look for joy and tranquility in that Man's soul, that is distract-ed with the rage of unruly and extravagant

travagant affections, which at once bid defiance to the Laws of Heaven, and to the reasons of his own mind. Nay, could we suppose, that God should pardon a bad Man, and still leave him under the Power and Dominion of his Lusts, this would not calm and pacifie his Conscience, *ne*ver-  
*me*sis, a Fury to pursue him, and would disturb him in his most soft and retired hours. Nothing but Religion, and the mighty assistance of Divine Grace, which is never wanting to Men's sincere endeavours, is able to allay these storms, to controul our passions, to curb and mortify our corrupt inclinations. For Religion circulates through all our Powers, disposes every faculty to act in its due place and order, and de-

termines every affection to its peculiar Object, which must needs produce an inestimable contentment and delight; has then the Harmony will be pleasant, when every string gives in its proper sound. Besides the very mastering of our vices, yields matter of Joy and Triumph; for though to contend with vicious habits, and radicated inclinations, y be as difficult and ingrateful task, yet this difficulty is chiefly in our first entrance upon a religious course; the Ice once broken, every temptation we repel, every Victory we obtain, will add a new pleasure and satisfaction to the mind, y as no work more delightful to a Conquerour, than to pursue a routed Enemy, that flies before him.

3. A Pious and Religious Life, secures to a Man the peculiar care and protection of the Divine Providence ; than which there cannot be a stronger support, and comfort to the mind of a wise and good Man. For what greater pleasure can there be, than to be assured, that whatever his circumstances may be in the World, yet all his concerns are lodged in the hands of unerring wisdom, and infinite power, which can and will succeed and prosper them to a happy event and issue ; to know that in all straits and difficulties he is under the immediate guard and superintendence of Heaven, and that God stands by him, and takes care of him : That same omnipotent Arm, that brought the World out of nothing, and keeps it from perishing by

the same power by which he made it, is much more able to relieve and rescue him in the greatest dangers.

Psalm 27.1 *The Lord is my light and my salvation*, says David, *Whom shall I fear?* *the Lord is the strength of my life*, *of whom shall I be afraid?*

23.4 *I walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for thou art with me.* A Pious Man, that is heartily devoted to God's service, can cheerfully trust God for his daily Bread, and is not anxiously concerned, if supplies come not in, just when he expects or wants them; he believes that that Almighty goodness, which provides for the meanest Creatures, and daily spreads a Table for the whole Creation, will much less neglect his own Children. Thus the Prophet argued when at his low-

lowest ebb; *Altbo' the Figtree shall not blossom, neither Fruit be in the Vines,* though the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields yield no Meat, the Flocks be cut off from the Fold, and there be no Herd in the Stalls, that is, though there should be an universal failing of all the ordinary supports of humane life, *Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* It is well for the World in general, that God Rules it, and takes care of it, *The Lord reigns, let the Earth rejoice.* Psalms 97.1. *Let the multitude of the Isles be glad thereof.* Islands, that are cut off from the help and security of the Continent, and naturally seem most exposed to danger, yet even these are safe under the Divine care and Government. But above all, good Men

Men have reason to rejoice, because God being their Father, whatever he does for others, he will be sure to order the administrations of his providence for their comfort and happiness.

4. Religion refreshes the mind of a good Man with a joyful assurance of the glory and blessedness of the other World. He that goes on by a *patient continuance in well doing*, assures himself from the Justice and unchangeableness of the Divine Promise, that however he fares at present, it shall be well with him at last, and he shall be happy for ever; That *there is a rest that remains*, a state of incomparable Glory prepared for them that love and obey God: And the expectations of This daily spring in upon his mind with fresh pleasures and

and satisfactions, and he cannot but rejoice to think, that he shall shortly arrive at that place, where he shall be as happy, as all the glory and blessedness of that state can make him: And indeed were it not for the pre-apprehensions of these future rewards, Virtue however lovely and amiable in it self, would be thought but cold comfort, and be able to bring over but few Proselytes and Followers; *If in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all Men most miserable.* But there are Joys unspeakable, and full of glory; ready to Crown the Piety of a good Man in the other World, and which will infinitely compensate all the difficulties of his present services and sufferings, which must needs make him lift up his Head with Joy and Triumph,

1 Cor. xv.  
xix.

umph, and take pleasure even under infirmities and distresses. *For this cause*, says St. Paul, *We faint not, but though our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed day by day; for our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* And so I proceed to the last things I propounded to consider, *viz.*

## III.

The Excellency of the pleasures of Religion, above all the delights and pleasures of this World, they Put more gladness into the Heart, than when

*when the Corn and the Wine increases.* And the great advantages of the one above the other, will appear from these following particulars.

1. The delights of this World are gross and corporeal, and affect only the external senses, and are the pleasures of the Brute, rather than of the Man. For any one to drown himself in sensual enjoyments, is in effect to degrade himself from the honour of humane nature, and to place his happiness in those things, wherein the Beasts have a better share than we. The Joys and sweetneses of Religion reside in the most noble and excellent part of Man, and that which alone is capable of true real pleasure, they come nearest to the happiness of Heaven, and the Joys of God himself. To be in Heaven

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not to be rich or honourable, or to swim in plenty, or to feast our senses with gross delights, no, the Joys of that state are chaste and rational, such as arise from the conscience of our innocence, and the sense of our happiness, our being for ever in the presence of God, and the company of pure and holy Souls. What is it that makes Heaven a happy place to good Men, but that they are unweariedly and uninterruptedly employed in the Ministeries of praise and admiration, always acting in subser-  
vency to the Will and Pleasure of their Maker? wherein consists the blessedness of God himself, but only in a happy contemplation of his own infinite Being, and a reflexion upon the exercise of his incomparable attributes and perfections? Religion, as it

it is the imitation of the Divine perfections, so the comforts of it are a kind of participation of God's own delights, they put us as it were into Heaven before hand, and shew us what our entertainment must be, when we come there.

2. The Pleasures of Religion are more solid and satisfying, than any thing this World can afford: They fill our appetites, and fix our desires, and settle the Soul upon the right basis and temper; as in nature, every thing is at ease and rest, when lodged in its proper center. All earthly delights are strangely unsuitable to the nature of our Spirits, our desires fly beyond the regions of fence, and grasp at something more than this lower World can present them with: No vicious Man could ever say he

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Habac. 2.5. had enough, *He enlarges his desires as Hell*, as the Prophets Phrase is, and his cravings are as insatiable as death it self. He is rack'd between his own inclinations, and rowls from one enjoyment to another, till the very object of his pleasure becomes the instrument of his torment. For not finding satisfaction in this thing, he turns to that, and so runs the round, and after all is never the nearer than he was before ; he has either too little or too much, and like *Amnon*, is either sick for what he has not, or surfeited of what he has. If residing on any one particular scene of pleasure, though it be that which he has most a mind to, he quickly grows weary, and it becomes to him a bondage and a burden. It is Religion only that can bound and terminate our

our desires, and fix the Soul in a hearty Union to the will of God, and in the enjoyment of him who is the chiefest good. Nor do the repeated acts of it ever cloy or weary us, they quiet our appetites, but do not nauseate them, because fresh delights are continually springing up, as they needs must do, where the Objects we feed upon are infinite and inexhausted. For,

3. Religious Pleasures are more large and comprehensive, they take in a vaster compass, the delights both of this and of the other World. How exquisitely pleasant must it needs be to a wise Man, to let loose his meditations through the several circles of Divine contemplation, to entertain himself with the thoughts of God, the best and most happy Being;

to

to consider the glories of his nature, the Wisdom and Harmony of his Creation, the wonders of his Providence, the treasures of his mercy, and the unfathomable designs of his love and goodness, in the great work of our redemption : Things which cannot but excite his wonder, and ravish his affections. And if only intellectual pleasures, which are but the exercise of one faculty, have so wide a Sphear to move in, what is there, when every faculty is employed upon its proper object ? In the best enjoyments upon Earth, we are soon at the end of the Line, the senses are limited to this and t'other object, and if that fails, their comforts are presently at an end, but spiritual delights are unconfined, and extend themselves equal to the desires, the

the needs , and capacities of the Soul.

4. The Pleasures of Religion, have infinitely the advantage of all others in point of duration and continuance , they abide with us, when all other comforts fly , or are rifled away from us. The delights of sense, as all other things in this World , are in their own nature fading and transient , and perish with the using, like *the crackling of Thorns under a Pot*, that make a flash and a blaze for a while , and then suddenly die away. Besides, they are exposed to a thousand casualties , that unavoidably break in upon us. *Belsazar* was Arrested in the midst of all his Jollity , and the Triumphs of his Court, when an unexpected Message from Heaven, meeting with the Vote

of

of a guilty Conscience , turn'd him into horror and trembling, and then all his light Airy Mirth vanished and disappeared. It is the peculiar excellency of Religion , that the comforts of it are out of the reach of all foreign and external accidents , and cannot be ravished from us. He that is the happiest Man in this World , is not able to secure his own felicity, because not able to defend it , from the rapine and malice of bad Men ; who can be too hard for him , and strip him of his Estate or Reputation , when they have a mind to it. But what can break the ease of a good Man ? what violence can force the guards of Conscience ? or disturb that composure that is within our own Breasts. Death it self does not take it away, but improve and

and perfect it : And when the Joy  
of a wicked Man shall *Perish like the  
Spiders Web*, and his hope be as the  
giving up of the Ghost : Then will the  
Pleasures of a good Conscience ac-  
company us into the other World ;  
*Mark the Perfect, and behold the Up-* Psal. 37.37.  
*right, for the end of that Man is  
Peace.*

Thus we see, That the ways of  
wisdom, are ways of pleasantness, and  
how much the delights of a vertu-  
ous and a good Man transcend all  
other whatsoever. A consideration  
that ought mightily to endear Reli-  
gion to us ; we naturally thirst after  
Pleasure, and 'tis no where substan-  
tially to be found, but in the course  
of a Holy Life. All sin is restless  
and tormenting, and sooner or later  
will make us troublesome and uneasy

E. to

to our selves: 'Tis some time before a bad Man can wholly debauch his Reason and his Conscience, and 'till he can, that will create him some trouble and difficulty, it being impossible a Man should sin with any tolerable ease or comfort, while Reason does remonstrate, and Conscience make head within. And when he has in a manner conquer'd all remorse, and stupified the sense of good and evil, he has no security that it will continue, but that upon every little affliction or petty accident conscience will awaken into rage and horror, and that will be a torment infinitely beyond what the most witty cruelty of Man could ever find out, it being in the Phrase of the excellent *Hierocles* to anticipate τα  
εν αδου κολασγια, the torments which the damned suffer in the other World;

as on the other hand to persevere in course of a serious and regular piety, is to enter upon the Joys of Heaven, even in this Life ; Joys which no misfortune is able to impair. 'Tis not all the World can make me miserable, if I be careful to preserve my innocence, and integrity. Tho' I cannot say (says *Plutarch*) that while I live, this or that calamity shall not befall me, yet this I can say, that while I live, I will never do this or that, I will not lie, or deceive, or craftily over-reach and betray my neighbour : For these and such like, are things that are in every Man's power,  $\eta\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\pi\epsilon\text{g}\circ\pi\epsilon\text{v}\mu\pi\alpha\pi\alpha\epsilon\text{g}\circ\pi\epsilon\text{v}$ , and do greatly conduce to the peace and tranquillity of our Minds.

The sum is this, *the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever* Esa. 32.17.

we would have made  
fort, or die with safety, this is the way  
this is the way that will sweeten the <sup>way</sup> of  
difficulties of our journey, and <sup>the</sup> way  
and bring us to the Vision of God.

16.11. in whose presence there is fulness of joy and  
at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore. To which God of infinite  
finite Mercy bring us all for Christ sake. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and  
glory. World without end. Amen.